

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF INDIA

In this state there is no legislative body. It is true that the Prince once declared to the Viceroy that he had moved with the times and had established an advisory council. The facts are that in 1919 the Jam Sahib issued an order establishing a council and *appointing* certain gentlemen as members. It was summoned to meet and the Jam Sahib delivered an address and so did the Maharajah of Alwar, who was on a visit to the state; it dispersed. So far as I can gather, it has never met again or been referred to!

There is no proper legislation. Administration is run by orders, circulars and rules issued at the sweet will of the ruler and his secretaries. In the Administration Report of the state it is impossible to get any clear conception of its finances. As in other states, there is a fixed civil list, but all sorts of expenditure will be debited to different heads. Superfluous palaces are debited to public works, money spent on princelings to education, and so on. Independent auditing is never allowed in most states. In Navanagar there are State monopolies, not only of intoxicants, but also of tobacco, cotton and salt. Villagers are instructed to smoke more and use more salt!

The *shikar* (hunt) in this state is famous not only for its variety, but also for the luxurious arrangements of the camps. These involve all kinds of petty tyrannies for the people, who are forbidden to kill the wild beasts that damage the crops and kill the inhabitants. For instance, in the village of Bhalsan an old lady was pounced on by a panther and killed. None dared to rescue her. Many other cases could be cited. In this state, as in many others, innumerable villagers have to leave their work and labour com-pulsorily at times of *shikar*. There are an incredible number of taxes. An agriculturalist has to pay more than 60 per cent, of his income in taxes. Enormous sums are spent on the personal luxuries of the ruler, estimated at 50 per cent, of the